

Our Walks To Remember by Giulsy

Category: Stranger Things (TV 2016)

Genre: Alternate Universe, Alternate Universe - High School, Angst, Enemies to Lovers, F/M, Family Drama, Family Issues, Friendship, High School, Introspection, Love, Past Abuse, Romance, Secret Identity, Team Bonding, Teen Romance

Language: English

Characters: Dustin Henderson, Eleven | Jane Hopper, James (Stranger Things), Jennifer Hayes, Jim "Chief" Hopper, Jonathan Byers, Joyce Byers, Karen Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, Maxine "Max" Mayfield, Mike Wheeler, Nancy Wheeler, Scott Clarke, Steve Harrington, Ted Wheeler, Troy (Stranger Things), Will Byers

Relationships: Eleven | Jane Hopper & Jim "Chief" Hopper, Eleven | Jane Hopper/Mike Wheeler

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2018-06-23

Updated: 2018-07-07

Packaged: 2022-04-22 05:08:24

Rating: Mature

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 3

Words: 3,929

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

Mike Wheeler, a 15 years old emotional hot mess, with too many old demons to fight.

Jane "El" Hopper, the Police Chief daughter: the best grades and a book always in her hands.

Two opposite Universe that just happen to collide.

But how many things can hide behind a stage curtain, the astronomy classroom and a certain diary ...

Basically, a Mileven AU inspired by "A walk to remember", by Nicholas Sparks.

1. Prologue

Summer was really coming to an end, no doubt about it.

September had just begun, bringing a breath of fresh breeze and the usual melancholy of the shorter days.

Everything now seemed to dance at a slower pace there in Hawkins, Indiana, just as if the summertime itself wanted to prolong his stay in the season of lightheartedness with a last round of waltz.

On that evening, in particular, time seemed to have stopped: with the full-moon, with its reflection fixed on the lake, the shops neon signs which were already off and the usual intermittent street lamp on the corner of the street, everything was quiet.

Only one, single noise broke the deafening silence in which Maple Street was immersed: the slight creaking of a bike that was running out towards the surrounding wood.

Mike Wheeler pedaled fast, without turning, dragging his usual crumpled backpack with him, along with all his fifteen-years-old's boldness.

He pedaled fast, with the cool air of that late hour that was stroking his cheeks.

He pedaled fast, faster than his own thoughts: he was actually used to silence them by now, overcoming their clamor with the metallic noise of the wheels on the stony ground.

-I'm almost there.-

Once he got close to the place that he, due to his never ending nerdness, used to call "Mirkwood" as a child, but that now had stopped exercising the childlike-kind of charm of enchanted land and had returned to be just the crossroads near the cliff, he dismounted from the saddle, devouring the last steep meters of the downhill road. Flashlights and a strong smell of wet grass were there to greet him, along with a familiar voice that was calling for him.

"Finally, Wheeler!"

"Yeah, I know Troy, I had to wait enough to let my mother think I was asleep!"

"You're always the weakling!"

"I learned from the best!"

He grinned and patted him a little too hard on the shoulder.

Troy Harrington: the "cool kid" par excellence, the "hot-spot" of Hawkins High, despite being only a sophomore.

Mike had always admired him for his shameless security, which he flaunted in every situation, just as if it was sewed on the leather jacket he always had.

Their relationship was weird, even if they had known each other before being able to write their names on their own.

Same neighborhood, same school, same traditional family.

They had practically grown up together.

"Hey, hey, Wheeler's here, ladies and gentlemen, look at him being as funny as usual and killing us all!"

James's deep and biting tone reached him, making him roll his eyes as usual.

"Just as much as your IQ -ah, no, that does not exist. Sorry bro, I forgot. "

The shrieking laughter of the rest of the group that followed got lost in the fresh air, among the pearly rays of the moon.

That was the usual routine: the bickering, the shoves, the giggles.

Always like that.

No real sharing that were not those stupid nights-out on the cliff, when all they did was drinking some secretly stolen beers and taking a bunch of cigarette shots, and, when there was the opportunity to do it, they'd also start to bother some poor guy who had accidentally pass by that street: nothing else to bring them together but the void of uselessness.

Still, Mike didn't try to change his situation, he didn't try to make it out: he kept staying in his bubble of estrangement, just as he kept staring at that moonlight in the sky that attracted him so much, to suppress every voice that in his head was screaming to turn around every time he was cycling towards that chasm.

But those evenings went on like that.

His whole life did.

"Oh, oh, look what we've got here: it's Will Byers, the little fairy!"

The squeaky sound of Jennifer Hayes' voice woke him up from the trans state in which he had currently fallen, and he turned around, just to see the girl's mockery subject braking his bike, after the road ahead of him had been blocked by James imposing figure.

"Hey, Byers! What are brats like you doing at this time of night?"- the redhead said.

Mike watched Will as he started to tremble on his seat, with his

green, wide eyes that were shining in the moonlight.

Will Byers had always been one of his little gang favorite victims and Mike could actually see why.

Will Byers was all that they were not: he was brilliant, polite, sensitive.

So irritatingly well-mannered it was unbearable.

He lived at the other end of that road, on the edge of the wood, in a house with chipped paint, at whose entrance was the old rocking chair, where his mother, Joyce, was always waiting for him.

Mike could clearly remember the first time he had met that woman: it was the first day of Kindergarten and he was playing in the sandbox, on his own.

He had hit the ground violently, trying to get out of it, and he had started to whine from his aching knee;

then, he had felt a gentle, warm hand on his shoulder and, looking up, he had found himself a few inches from her, who was holding a small Will with his other arm.

"It's okay, baby. Don't cry.

See? It's just a scratch. "

Mike had stayed quiet, enchanted by that kind, gentle tone.

"I ... I'm Will." A timid voice had said after a minute, coming from the little boy who had remained silent until then, his face slightly hidden by the long bangs.

"You can come drawing with me if you want to." He added.

Mike remembered feeling right at that moment: it seemed a thousand years ago.

And maybe it really was.

"Oh, holy shit!"

It was a loud bang to bring him back to reality this time, after this wandering down memory lane. And what he saw right after hit him like a hurricane in his chest.

2. A Weirdo

Notes for the Chapter:

Hello everyone, so let's start with this :)
I know the chapter is pretty short, but I needed that to "introduce" some of the characters and situations, anyway I hope the next ones are gonna be longer and more interesting!

"Fuck, we're screwed."

"They're gonna expell us all. I can feel that."

"We're lucky we're not getting arrested."

The room was filled with this kind of words and also with an ensemble of expectations and anxious trepidation.

Mike was the only one who stayed quite during that whole morning, lost in his thoughts as usual and feeling something heavy in his stomach everytime his mind turned back to what he had seen last night. He just couldn't get that out of his head.

"Oh my God, that's blood."

"Fuck you James, you should have stopped before."

"What the hell is happening here, kids?"

The screaming, the headlights of the Police car, Will's bleeding forehead: it had been awful.

It all had happened so fast he still couldn't believe that: one moment there was James who was mockingly giving Will some too strong punches on his waist and calling him names, making him draw back, the moment after Will had let his bike fall to the ground and, while stuttering to let him go, he had slipped on the rocks on the edge of the cliff, hitting his head.

He had losed consciousness right after and they had all started to freak out, until a patrol car had arrived, being there by complete accident while going back to the Station.

Will could have died, if he'd slipped just a few steps further.

He could have died. That was crazy.

So, there they were: Mike, Troy, James, Jennifer, her best friends Stacey and Maggie, the whole gang sitting outside the Principal's Office at school, waiting for their destiny, while Principal Green himself and the Chief of Police were discussing about that on the

other side of the door.

After what it seemed like an eternity, the two men both showed up on the office door, with a stern look on their faces and holding their documents along with some papers into their hands.

"Okay, come in everybody." Principal Green said, with a deep tone.

Mike was the last one to get into the small room and he could distinctly feel the Chief's cold gaze on him: that man was scary, no doubts about that.

"So, I'm going to speak just once and I want all of you to open your ears properly and most of all to do some deep soul-searching about what happened last night. Because this isn't some stupid joke. That's a serious deal and I need you all to understand that your actions always have consequences, especially the mean ones."

Jim Hopper's voice was filled with seriousness and also with something that Mike could guess was a mix of worry and affection: after all, Will was kind of his own son, since the man and Joyce had been a thing for over three years now and they were currently living together.

"You're lucky, brats: no one is going to file a report this time. But you're going to pay for what happened because I will not allow any more bullying in my town."

They kept staying silent, and they just nodded lightly.

"Fine. First of all, you are all going to do 70 hours of community service. Principal Green will give you some phamplets with all the details. And then, you're going to help the janitors here at school. Every afternoon, from Monday to Friday, 4-7 pm."

There was a too loud groan that came out from Troy's mouth after hearing that, but the Hopper's look that followed was enough to make them all unable to make the slightest sound.

"Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes sir."

"Good. I have my eyes on you, kids. Don't do anything stupid."

As Hopper went out of the Office, they all started to pack their things and, after another warning speech from Green, they headed out of the room.

"Mr. Wheeler? Wait a minute. I need to talk to you alone."

Mike was stopped by the Principal's voice before he could even get up from his chair.

"Sure."

Green closed the door behind Troy's back, just after he'd raised his hand in a 'good-luck' gesture.

The older man sat down at his desk and he took something from the left drawer.

"Mr. Wheeler, I guess you recognize these."

Four bottles of beer were getting lined up on the table by Green.

-Oh fuck.-

"Well, these were in your backpack last night, but you know that already. And honestly I'm not here to do you a scolding about how dangerous can be for guys your age to drink alcohol and how, anyway, that's illegal 'cause you're just fifteen, because you hear about this kind of things like everyday and it didn't stop you from having those bottles with you, so, that's clearly not the right path to follow to make you understand."

Mike was staring at the empty beers in front of him, almost captivated by how the sunlight hit the green glass, while listening to the man's words.

"What I'm trying to say, Michael, is that I'm really really worried about you. You've always been a good student, very curious and smart, but since the last days of school last year, I noticed that something about you was off and it still is.

And I get that, Michael, I really get that with everything that happened with your dad and-"

"That doesn't mean anything!"-Mike cut him off immediately.

Green took his glasses off at that comment and started to rub his nose, trying to find the right words.

"Well, anyway, things need to change. That's why I want you to spend some time with people that can actually have a good influence on you."

"Such as?"

"Let me get this straight: when school is going to start next week, I want you to do the tutoring for some of your fellow students in the afternoon."

"Oh God, are you serious? Me and that bunch of nerds?"

"That's correct, Mr Wheeler. And I'm not done yet."

Mike gave him his best sassy look and snorted.

"You are going to be a part of this year Christmas' musical."

Mike let out a laugh after hearing those words, but his smile

disappeared in a second when he saw the Principal's totally serious face.

"Wait, this has to be a joke."

"You heard me, Wheeler."

"What? I have to do that stupid recital ... for real?"

"I'm beyond serious."

"Oh God, please this really must be a joke."

"Why are you complaining? I remembered you being musical inclined. And, however, this is not a request. You have to do that."

Mike let out a loud sigh, as he hold his backpack.

"Come on, Michael. Maybe something special is waiting for you in this adventure."

"Yeah sure. Maybe some headache." He said, as he went out of the office.

-God, this school year is not even started and it sucks already.-

Those last days of freedom before the school started had really flown by and, so, there it was: the night before the beginning.

The Wheeler's household was quiet as usual, with all the lights already turned off, except for the kitchen's one.

Mike was sitting on the counter, while twirling one of his little sister's spinning top.

"Are you ready for tomorrow?"

"Can't you see that? I'm dying with excitement."

Karen Wheeler rolled her eyes at his son's sassiness.

"Well, excited or not, I don't want you to get into trouble again. I'm warning you, Michael."

"Yeah, sure."

Karen let out a resigned sigh, then, while gently stroking his dark locks, said: "By the way, don't you think it's the case to call your father? It's been a month and-"

"I don't care, I don't wanna talk to him anyway."

"Michael, list-"

"I said I don't care."

Mike abruptly pulled back from his mother's touch, as he went away from the kitchen and started to run upstairs.

"Michael, please!"

Mike closed his bedroom's door behind him with a bang, and turned on the music on his Walkman.

-Don't think, Mike, just don't think.-

"Gosh, Wheeler, you look terrible."

"I didn't sleep too much. Anyway, you look like shit too, James, as always."

Mike snapped back, while parking his bike next his friends' ones.

Troy laughed at their words and patted them both on their shoulders before saying:

"Well, well, well you guys, that's it: let's get this sophomore year started!"

"Yeah, I'm so excited about this recital shit you have no idea."

"Oh, Wheeler don't be so bitter about this: you're gonna look good in some elfin costume."

"Shut the hell up, Troy."

"Speaking of ugly clothing, look what we have here."

Mike turned his head to where Troy was looking and, suddenly, his dark eyes met a pair of hazel ones.

Standing just a few steps away from him, there was a tiny girl with a bunch of dark-blond locks and very long lashes.

Mike, as well as all of his friends, knew exactly who she was: Jane Hopper, the Chief's only child.

She was currently busy with some boxes, with a telescope coming out from one.

"God, I bet she was born with that shirt on her. I've never seen her wearing anything else." Troy said, with a sneering grin painted on his face.

Mike laughed at that, looking at her tartan green and grey shirt.

In that moment, the girl looked up to them, while walking towards the school entrance.

"Hey, Hopper. Nice shirt." James said, mocking her.

She stopped right in front of them, holding a box in her arms.

"Thank you James. I'm sorry I cannot say the same about yours." She answered back, with a sweet smile on her face. When they heard those words, they started a chorus of giggles and jokes, while making fun of James' confused expression.

Mike was almost crying for laughs, but he immediately stopped when he noticed that Jane was still standing there, looking in a very specific direction: his one.

Mike stood still for a moment, looking back at her in her expressive

eyes with a weird look painted on his face, until she shook her head and started walking away again.

He followed her with his gaze, with just a single thoughts in his mind:

-That girl is weird, no doubts about that-

Notes for the Chapter:

Aaand here we are!

Let me know what you think.

Love < 3

Giulsy

3. A Strange Feeling

Notes for the Chapter:

Hello Everybody <3

I'm sorry it took so long to update, but I'm still busy with some exams at University.

I know this is very short, but I really wanted to post some content.

Hope you'll like it <3

Two-thirty PM: the last period of that first day had just finished.

"Okay, I'll see everyone tomorrow. Thanks for your attention."

Mike barely heard Mrs. Philips' voice while she was saying those words, lost in his thoughts as usual and, most of all, dealing with a growing sense of bother because of what was waiting for him that afternoon.

He reluctantly put his things back in his backpack and started to walk down the hallway, heading for that very specific and, for him, unknown, classroom on the third floor.

He approached the big, grey door that bore the inscription "Afterschool class" and he walked in, rolling his eyes.

The first things he noticed, after closing the door behind him, was that the room was louder than he'd expected: many laughs were rising from every corner and a faint light was coming from the large windows.

Sitting at the large desks, there were a dozen of kids Mike assumed were all freshmen and they were currently staring at him, with weird looks on their faces.

Mike had never felt more uncomfortable in his entire life, that was a fact.

He awkwardly stood there for a few moments, not really knowing what to do, until he heard a calm voice really close to him.

"Oh, My! Look what the wind blew in: Michael Wheeler!"

He turned on his right and he found a Jane Hopper with a notebook in her hands. And she was staring at him with a raised eyebrow.

-*"Well, of course she's here."* - he thought.

"What kind of mystical force had brought you here? Did you get lost?" she snapped right after.

Mike clenched his jaws , the anger rising inside of him, and he said:
“Well, ya know, Hopper, I was actually looking for the junkyard ...
And, wow, it seems I’m in the right place!”

-*Oh, that was mean!*- A tiny voice in Mike’s said, but he just locked it in some remote corner of his brain, not listening to it.

The tiny girl in front of him looked at the floor, with a smirk on her face, and when she looked up again she just closed the notebook in her hands and said:

“You’re right, Wheeler. You’re in the right place, since everything you say is trash.”

Touché.

“Anyway, for real, what do you want? ‘Cause if you’re here to make any troubles, I-”

“Hey, hey, calm down! I’m not. Unfortunately, Principal Green wants me to help these shitheads in some way. Like a tutoring thing.”

Disbelief was painted all across Jane’s face as she was hearing those words.

“... You? A tutor? This must be a mistake.”

“Yeah, tell me about it.”

“Oh Gosh ... well, since I’m the main tutor here I guess you will be in need of some advices.”

“How exciting!” Mike said, with a smirk.

“You’re not funny at all, Michael. Anyway, the guys here are all amazing kids that just need a little bit of encouragement.

Our job is to be as supportive as we can, to listen to them and to focus on what they’re most good at, just so they can grow more self-confidence.”

While he was listening, without paying too much attention to her words, Mike still couldn’t help but notice how her face was literally lighting up, as she looked at the kids in the room that were currently busy with some maps.

A warm smile found its way on her face and it was still there, on her lips, when she turned back to Mike.

“All joking aside ... I actually think this will be good for you, Wheeler.”

Mike looked at her in the eyes and, for the very first time, he noticed how expressive her eyes were.

-*Wow*- the same tiny voice in his head said: he just shook it after a second.

“Mmm, okay, I guess. Fine. Where should I start, then?”

"Well, Mr. Wheeler I think the starting point, in these cases, is always a broom."

Ben, the janitor, was standing right beside him, with a crooked grin on the lips.

"Don't mess with me, kid, Principal Green has been clear: you have to clean the hallways and the stairs first, then you come back here until 6 P.M."

Mike, who was definitely tall for his age, barely reached the bearded man's arm with his head, so he really didn't dare to snap back: he took a broom in his hand instead and he followed him out of the classroom.

"See you later, Michael." Jane said, with a laugh.

-Ugh she's so freakin' annoying- But he couldn't help but grin: that girl was another world.

He mentally called himself a stupid for making a thought like that.

"Wow, look at this: Mike Wheeler, the cute laundress."

"You're an asshole, Troy."

Mike had just finished his turn as a janitor, when he felt a strong hand on his shoulder and heard Troy's subtle laugh.

"Come on, Mickey, I'm joking. I've been doing this shit all day too, ya know."

"Yes, but you're free to go now. I'm stuck here."

"Oh, little Wheeler and his beer trouble."

"You little dickheads are always the lucky bastards. I didn't even drank one." Mike replied, with a smirk.

"I know, but it seems like you're the diamond in the rough of the situation. That's why you're being reeducated like this." He laughed.

"Just shut up, you idiot." Mike said, giving him a shove.

"Well, well, good luck, my dear friend. Don't let Jane Hopper make you shit your pants."

"Screw you, Troy."

Mike wiped the sweat from his forehead, and he turned to see that grey door in front of him again.

The first thing he noticed was that the loud buzz that he'd found almost an hour before, when he had first entered in the classroom was now over.

He was still outside the room and he just kept staring there, fascinated by what he was seeing: Jane was now in front of the other

students, that were all looking at her, and she was very passionately talking about some constellations that were drawn on a big, black map.

Mike just didn't feel like interrupting that little lessons, so he just kept listening to her: he had never really heard her talking for so long and with such vivid eyes.

He had to admit to himself that she looked like a completely different person, almost a *cool* one.

Well, as far as you can define "cool" a girl who was a bookworm, freshmen's tutor, with terrible acid-washed jeans and ugly oversized shirts, but, in that moment, that was what Mike was feeling towards her.

She was now talking about the constellation of Orion, hooping the stars with a white marker, and he, with his hands that were still holding the broom, felt something that he didn't really understand in that exact moment, but that hit him right in the chest: he felt ... *calm*. For the first times in many months, he was really feeling serene and that felt really weird for him: for some reason, that girl's voice and her passion about what she was talking about had that effect on his mind and body.

-*"God, Mike, you're pathetic."*- And there he was, all over again: running away from emotions as usual.

Will it ever stop?

Author's Note:

So, basically, I came up with this after a random rewatch of the movie last night and I really don't know how it will eventually turn out, but I'd like to challenge myself with this new adventure.

As always, i apologize if I make some mistakes, but I promise I'm trying my best with my English and I hope it's not too bad.

Anyway, I'd love to know what you think of this, even if it's just a small prologue.

See you soon <3